



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 111<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 155

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2009

No. 139

## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, we have depended on our own strength long enough. Though we talk of Your greatness and might, we too often seek to tackle life's challenges and problems by leaning completely upon our limited power and understanding.

Remind us that every good and perfect gift comes from You and that we have no strength apart from You. In a world where evil seems so rampant, inspire our lawmakers to lead pure and unselfish lives that are worthy of Your name.

Lord, use them to create goodwill that will challenge the best in people and will usher in the reign of Your abiding peace. Draw them together in oneness in diversity, unity in patriotism, and loyalty in a shared commitment to You.

We pray in Your wonderful Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable TOM UDALL led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, September 30, 2009.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM UDALL, a Senator from the State of New Mexico, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### CHANGES IN THE SENATE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I was thinking this morning after the prayer and pledge how things in the Senate, because of tradition, rarely change. But one of the things that has changed during the time I have been in the Senate is the Pledge of Allegiance. That wasn't done before. I don't know how many years ago the pledge was started, and it doesn't matter who the leader of the Senate is, it is something I think will be with us forever in the Senate. I think it is a good tradition we picked up.

As I recall—my friend is on the Senate floor, the Republican leader—this was started during—was it Senator Frist or Dole? When was that, do you recall? It was one of the Republican leaders.

Mr. MCCONNELL. If the majority leader will yield, I think it was 8 or 10 years ago. Interestingly enough, I believe who first suggested it was former Senator Bob Smith of New Hampshire, and it was widely recognized on both sides of the aisle that this is something we should have been doing for a long time.

Mr. REID. When I was president of the senate in Nevada, that was something we always did. Of course, I remember Bob Smith. I think it was a Republican leader, but, regardless, it is something that is a part of the tradition now, and I am glad we are doing it.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in morning business for 1 hour; Republicans will control the first 30 minutes and the majority will control the next 30 minutes. Following that morning business, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 2918, the Legislative Branch appropriations bill and the continuing resolution, with the time until 4:30 equally divided and controlled between Senators NELSON of Nebraska and MURKOWSKI. Senators should expect a series of three rollcall votes. We hope there could even be more than that, to begin about 4:30 this afternoon.

The Senate will recess from 12:30 until 2:15 to allow for our weekly caucus luncheons.

I am sure Republican luncheons are packed with a lot of discussion. I know I had a meeting earlier this morning with a number of Senators, and we have a lot to talk about. We have the health care bill. We have to talk about energy, which is something we need to do. Regulation reform, we are going to talk about that at our caucus. And we are going to spend a little bit of time on Afghanistan.

That brings us to the point that this afternoon there is going to be a Members-only, classified briefing at 5:30 with GEN Jim Jones, the National Security Adviser to the President. The issue of dealing with Afghanistan has heated up. That is going to be there—perhaps on this bill that is before us, if not shortly thereafter—as to what we are going to do on Afghanistan.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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